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Upon Party

by

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BURKE ON PARTY.

A CERTAIN cabal has with great success propagated a doctrine, which serves for a colour to acts of treachery; and whilst it receives any degree of countenance, it will be utterly senseless to look for a vigorous opposition to the court party. The doctrine is this: that all political connexions are in their nature factious, and as such ought to be dissipated and destroyed; and that the rule for forming administrations is mere personal ability, rated by the judgment of this cabal upon it, and taken by draughts from every division and denomination of public men. This decree was solemnly promulgated by the head of the court corps, the Earl of Bute himself, in a speech which he made, in the year 1766, against the then administration, the only administration which he has ever been known directly and publicly to oppose.

It is, indeed, in no way wonderful that such persons should make such declarations. That connexion and faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconstitutional statesmen. The reason is evident. Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas, when they lie dispersed, without concert, order

or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles, nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts in business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perseverance or efficacy. In a connexion, the most inconsiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value and his use; out of it, the greatest talents are wholly unserviceable to the public. No man, who is not inflamed by vainglory into enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single, unsupported, desultory, unsystematic endeavours are of power to defeat the subtle designs and united cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

It is not enough in a situation of trust in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of public duty. That duty demands and requires, that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust, almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life that

he has always acted right, but has taken special care to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue somewhat out of humour with all sorts of connexion in politics. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies a narrow, bigoted and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest. But where duty renders a critical situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from the evils attendant upon it, and not to fly from the situation itself. If a fortress is seated in an unwholesome air, an officer of the garrison is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he must not desert his station. Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices, which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connexions in politics; essentially necessary for the full performance of our public duty; accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens, as that the bonds of our party weaken those by which we are held to our country. Some legislators went so far as to make neutrality in party a crime against the state. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overstrain the principle. Certain it is the best patriots in the greatest commonwealths, have always commanded and promoted such connexions. "Idem sentire de republica," was with them a principal ground of friendship and attach-

ment,* nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance, not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called "Necessitudo sortis,"† and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in the state as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honest means to advance to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connexions had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of public trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, showed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a public situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become "plus sages que les sages," as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who have lived before us. It was their wish, to see public

* [In the dialogue "De Amicitiâ," "ut de Republicâ non idem omnes sentirent," is mentioned by Lælius as the second reason adduced by Scipio, in support of the observation "nihil difficilius esse quàm amicitiam usque ad extremum vitæ permanere."]

† [A very young foreign correspondent has sent me a long note on the "necessitudo sortis," which he denominates the "necessitudo collegii." [Collegium: corpus hominum ejusdem muneris.] This "necessitudo," he observes, produces the most lasting friendship, the "necessitudo sanguinis" excepted.]

and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation, reciprocally supporting and supported. In one of the most fortunate periods of our history, this country was governed by a connexion; I mean the great connexion of Whigs in the reign of Queen Anne.* They were complimented upon the principle of this connexion by a poet who was in high esteem with them. Addison, who knew their sentiments, could not praise them for what they considered as no proper subject of commendation. As a poet who knew his business, he could not applaud them for a thing which, in general estimation, was not highly reputable. Addressing himself to Britain,

> "Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport,
> Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
> On the firm basis of desert they rise,
> From long-try'd faith, and friendship's holy ties."†

The Whigs of those days believed that the only proper method of rising into power, was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined that patriotism was a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or dearest connexions in private life, and of all the virtues that rise from those relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality to imagine that a spirit of moderation, was properly shown in patiently bearing the sufferings of your friends; or that disinterestedness was clearly manifested at the expense of other people's fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; that no men could act with

* [See Appendix A. Lord John Russell's Reign of Queen Anne.]
† [The Campaign. 1705.]

confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests.

These wise men, for such I must call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Somers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in these maxims, upon which the whole fabric of public strength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childish talker. They were not afraid that they should be called an ambitious Junto, or that their resolution to stand or fall together should, by placemen, be interpreted into a scuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavours, the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part I find it impossible to conceive that any one believes in his own politics, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore, every honourable connexion will avow it is their first purpose to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions, into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controlled, or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair

connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as the best. Of this stamp is the cant of—"Not men, but measures;" a sort of charm by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations, even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any public utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who

never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice that a man's connections should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connexions, the desertion is a manifest fact, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a measure of government be right or wrong, is no matter of fact, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual thinks the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is, therefore, very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wish to find no substance in a doctrine which has a tendency to destroy all test of character, as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuse my adding something more towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obscurity to dishonesty has been able to cover with some degree of darkness and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as I believe no connexions (except some court factions) ever could be so senselessly

tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will in particular instances think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of public business are related to, or dependent on, some great leading general principles in government; a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company, if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom without violating concord or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of public utility?

I remember an old scholastic aphorism which says,

" that the man who lives wholly detached from others must be either an angel or a devil." When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature—to bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth—so to be patriots as not to forget we are gentlemen—to cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities—to have both strong, but both selected; in the one, to be placable, in the other immoveable—to model our principles to our duties and our situation—to be fully persuaded that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults, in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.*

* See Burke's " Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents." 1770.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL ON PARTY.

LET us endeavour, in a few words, to explain the existence of party-divisions, and to vindicate the integrity of those who avow that they belong to party. The general defence of political connection, indeed, may be left where Mr. Burke has placed it. There can be nothing more striking, or more sound, than his writings on this subject. But although his reasoning never has been, and never can be, answered, a certain degree of favour still attends the man who declares himself not to belong to party; as if he were clearing himself from the imputation of dishonesty or selfishness.

The division of England into two great parties began, as I conceive, and still continues, in consequence of wide and irreconcileable differences of opinion.

The Tories look upon the exaltation of the crown as the favourite object of the constitution. Allowing, as they now do, perhaps, that the king is intrusted with his power for the public good, they yet think that public good requires he should be unfettered in the exercise of his prerogative, so far as the law permits. While he remains, therefore, within the legal bounds assigned to him, they are, to say the least, extremely unwilling to control his power. If he steps beyond them, or places the country in great

danger, they are ready to oppose the crown by their votes in parliament, or in any other legal manner. It follows from their doctrine, however, that their tendency always is to support the king in the first place, in all his measures, and to refuse their sanction only when those measures have placed the country in peril so imminent, that they are obliged reluctantly to disclose their own opinions.

The Whigs look towards the people, whose welfare is the end and object of all government. They maintain that as the king's advisers are responsible for his measures, it is the duty of parliament to examine and pronounce whether those measures are wise and salutary. They are, therefore, ready to interfere with any exercise of the prerogative, which they think unwise or improper; and to insist (too haughtily, perhaps, at times) upon the adoption of that line of policy which they consider as best adapted to the wants and state of the country.

Such appears to me a just general representation of Whig and Tory opinions. I know that the Tory doctrine is not now so much avowed as formerly, but it animates more than ever, if possible, the views and conduct of that party.

If I have made a fair statement, it was inevitable that the two parties should separate and remain divided.

Let me now suppose a young member of parliament coming to London at the beginning of the reign of Queen Anne. He adopts, if you please, the general opinions of the Tories. He votes generally, but not always, with that party. He naturally becomes acquainted with some of them. He talks over the questions that are coming on for some time before. These conversations lead to a more intimate union. His opinions are listened to, and his doubts melt away in the course of amicable discussion. Sometimes, when the measure is one of party policy rather than of

principle, he surrenders his own opinion to that of the statesmen most respected by the society of which he is a member. He thinks it more probable that several able, and a large body of patriotic men, arguing from the same principles as himself, should form a right decision, than that he alone in the whole House of Common should, from given general principles, have derived a true conclusion. He is, in short, a party man. Thus it is, that, without any violalation of conscience, party is formed and consolidated, and men acquire that kind of " esprit monacal" which, according to the remark of a very sagacious foreigner,* prevails in the political confederacies of England.

Let us now proceed to the effects of party contests.

Among the bad effects of party is to be reckoned the want of candour it necessarily produces. Few men can enter into the heat of political contention, backed by a body

* The Abbé Galiani. [The reader will need no excuse for the insertion in this place of Marmontel's lively portrait of the Abbé Galiani.—" L'abbé Galiani étoit de sa personne le plus joli petit arlequin qu'eut produit l'Italie; mais sur les épaules de cet arlequin étoit la tête de Machiavel. Epicurien dans sa philosophie, et avec une ame mélancolique, ayant tout vu du côté ridicule, il n'y avoit rien ni en politique, ni en morale, à propos de quoi il n'eut quelque bon conte à faire; et ces contes avoient toujours la justesse de l'à-propos, et le sel d'une allusion imprévue et ingénieuse. Figurez-vous, avec cela, dans sa manière de conter et dans sa gesticulation, la gentillesse la plus naive, et voyez quel plaisir devoit nous faire le contraste du sens profond que présentoit le conte avec l'air badin du conteur. Je n'exagère point en disant qu'on oublioit tout pour l'entendre, quelquefois des heures entières. Mais son rôle joué, il n'étoit plus de rien dans la société; et triste et muet dans un coin, il avoit l'air d'attendre impatiemment le mot du guet pour rentrer sur la scène. Il en étoit de ses raisonnemens comme de ses contes; il falloit l'écouter. Si quelquefois on l'interrompoit: 'Laissez moi donc achever, disoit-il, vous aurez bientôt tout le loisir de me répondre.' Et lorsqu'après avoir décrit un long cercle d'inductions (car c'étoit sa manière), il concluoit enfin, si l'on vouloit lui répliquer, on le voyoit se glisser dans la foule, et tout doucement s'échapper."—Œuvres Posthumes de Marmontel. Tom. 2, pp. 121—3.]

of friends, who animate and support each other, without attributing to their adversaries intentions and motives, of which they are no more capable than themselves.

Another evil is, that men become unwilling to give way to the natural bent of their minds, when their understandings would lead them to admit any error upon which their adversaries have insisted, or to render them liable to reproach for weakness and inconsistency. Obstinacy in supporting wrong, because an admission of what was right and true would give a triumph to opposition, has led many a minister of England into a course most injurious to the country.

In attributing this evil to party, I by no means intend to lay upon the same cause the blame of the exaggeration which accompanies political discussion. Such exaggeration I believe to be inevitable. It is true, indeed, that every statesman has often occasion to weigh with some degree of doubt the reasons for, or against, a measure which he afterwards supports or opposes, with as much warmth and confidence, as if there could not be two opinions on the subject; but it does not follow that it would be right or useful to produce in public, all the arguments which have gone through his mind before he came to a decision. What would be the effect, for instance, of the speech of a minister proposing an address in support of a new war, who should lay a stress upon the hazards it would be attended with, and the new burthens it must infallibly produce? Nothing, it is evident, but discouragement, and perhaps a disgraceful treaty. For the slightest words which a man lets fall in opposition to his ultimate opinion, are of more weight against that opinion than the strongest argument he can use in its favour. Those who agree with him are all disheartened, and those who differ from him are all encouraged. Nor does this proceed from the factitious spirit of

party, but from nature herself. Human affairs are so constituted, that the truth scarcely ever lies entirely on one side; and the human mind is so formed, that it must either embrace one side only, or sink into inaction.

Nor do I impute to party the corruption by which votes in parliament are obtained. Some persons, I know, imagine, that the minister has recourse to corruption only because it is necessary to strengthen himself against the opposition. But it is evident that, in a free government like ours, the ministers will always make use of the influence of money and patronage that is in their hands to procure themselves adherents. For a minister knows very well that he must have adherents. He cannot reasonably found his administration on the support which he may be able to obtain by his arguments in favour of each particular measure. Now, of the two ways of procuring adherents,—the attachment of interest, and that of party,—party is by far the best. Many a man, I fear, would abandon his opinions, and fall off from his principles, for the sake of office, who yet will not desert a party to which he is engaged by passion and affection as well as by reason.

Party, therefore, instead of being the cause of corrupt and undue influence, is often a substitute for it. Some, indeed, think it possible that the world may be governed by pure intention and the force of argument only. But it is well said by Mr. Wilberforce, when speaking of religion, "Man is not a being of mere intellect. Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor, is a complaint which, alas! we might all of us daily utter. The slightest solicitation of appetite is often able to draw us to act in opposition to our clearest judgment, our highest interests and most resolute determination." "These observations," proceeds the enlightened author, "hold equally in every instance according

to its measure, wherein there is a call for laborious, painful, and continued exertions, from which we are likely to be deterred by obstacles, or seduced by the solicitation of pleasure. What then is to be done in the case of any such arduous and necessary undertaking? The answer is obvious:—You should endeavour not only to convince the understanding, but also to affect the heart; and for this end you must secure the reinforcement of the passions."

The good effects of party in this country are numerous and weighty. One of the chief of them is, that it gives a substance to the shadowy opinions of politicians, and attaches them permanently to steady and lasting principles. The true party man finds in his own mind certain general rules of politics, like the general rules of morals, by which he decides every new and doubtful case. The belief that those principles are just, enables him to withstand the seductions of interest, and the ingenuity of projects: his conduct acquires somewhat of the firmness of integrity and wisdom.

The union of many in the same views enables a party to carry measures, which would not otherwise gain attention. There is many a proposition eminently useful, yet not calculated to catch popular favour, which by the stout and strong working of a party, at length becomes law; that which is an overmatch for the strength of an individual is accomplished by the united force of numbers. The waggon arrives at last at its destination; but a loose horse will probably return to the place from which he set out. It likewise sometimes happens that party succeeds where the people have failed. The enthusiasm of a whole nation is in its nature evanescent. If successfully resisted at first, it often sinks into apathy, and the country remains passive, though not satisfied, under the weight of a defeat. But a

party is pledged; the character of the individuals belonging to it depends upon their consistency; their principles are handed down from father to son, and become the mould from which successive generations receive the form and pressure of their politics. It may be observed on the other side, that many instances can be quoted of parties, who, on coming into power, have contracted and shrunk from their original professions; but they are not so frequent as those of a complete and radical change in the popular voice with respect to the objects of its predilection or aversion.

The greatest benefit of all that is conferred by party, is, perhaps, that it embodies the various opinions of the nation for the time being. Those opinions are at times so violent, that had they not a vent in parliament they would break the machine to pieces. Happily the people, when they overturned Sir Robert Walpole, placed confidence (a confidence little justified, perhaps,) in his opponents; and when Lord North appeared to have ruined every thing, the nation looked for safety to Lord Rockingham and Mr. Fox. There may be a revolution in this country; but it is hardly possible that the country should not first try what may be done by a change of counsels. Thus the great and final reason of nations, the right of resistance, is not likely to be used till better and safer means have been tried. To possess such means is a great advantage for the nation which can employ them.

In reckoning up the bad effects of party, I have not spoken of the animosities and violent contentions it produces. Mock philosophers, sentimental women, and effeminate men, are always making lamentations over political divisions and contested elections.

Men of noble minds know that they are the workshop of national liberty and national prosperity.

It is from the heat and hammering of the stithy that freedom receives its form, its temper, and its strength.*

From this time [1672] we may date the origin of the party to which Lord Russell thenceforward belonged. There are persons who think the name of party implies blame, who, whilst they consider it natural and laudable that men should combine for any other object of business or pleasure, and whilst they are lavish in bestowing their confidence on government, which must in its nature be a party, finds something immoral and pernicious in every union of those, who join together to save their country from unnecessary burdens or illegal oppression. To such persons Lord Russell's conduct must appear indefensible.

But to all those who allow that party may sometimes be useful, and opposition often even necessary, I may safely appeal for the justification of his conduct. To overthrow a scheme so formed as that of Charles and James†

* [See Chapter 17 of Lord John Russell's "Essay on the History of the English Government and Constitution from the Reign of Henry VII."]

† [The scheme was the introduction into England of an army of Frenchmen, to force the nation to embrace the Catholic religion and a change in the form of government. Lord J. Russell's "Life of Lord W. Russell," vol. i. pp. 51—54.].

[Lord J. Russell says that it was to oppose this scheme that Lord Russell left the tranquillity of private life, and without any ambition to distinguish himself, either as a speaker or a leader, did not hesitate to involve himself deeply in political contentions. * * * An endeavour to prevent the objects of this scheme from being attained guided his conduct in life, and was finally the cause of his death. If we wish to estimate the value of his exertions, let us imagine the ravagers of the Palatinate admitted into this country by the treachery of its Sovereign, and executing the designs of a native tyrant with the zeal of a foreign enemy. We shall then have reason to be grateful that some were found who opposed, from their commencement, the measures of the King's Government. Ibid. p. 55.]

it was not sufficient to give honest, but unconnected votes in the House of Commons. It was necessary to oppose public discussion to secret intrigue, and persevering union to interested combination: it was necessary to overlook the indiscreet violence of partisans, to obtain the fruits of the zeal from which it sprung: it was necessary to sink every little difference in the great cause of the Protestant religion, and our ancient freedom: in fine, it was the duty of the lovers of their country to counteract system by system, and numbers by numbers. It may likewise be remarked, that the manner in which this party opposed the crown was characteristic of the nation to which they belonged. In any of the continental monarchies, a design on the part of the king to alter the religion and the laws of the kingdom would have been met either with passive submission, insurrection, or assassination. For in those countries men who did not dare to speak the truth to their sovereign, were not afraid to take up arms against him. But in England the natural and constitutional method of resisting public measures hurtful to the liberty or welfare of the people, is by a parliamentary opposition. This was the only course which Lord Russell and his friends ever thought of adopting; and they did it under circumstances extremely discouraging, for they could expect little support in a parliament chosen in the heat of the Restoration, and still less assistance from a press restrained by the curb of a Licence Act.*

* [See Chapter 3 of Lord John Russell's "Life of Lord William Russell."]

APPENDIX (A).

Lord John Russell's Reign of Queen Anne.

QUEEN Anne came to the throne with violent prejudices in favour of Tory politics, both in church and state, and severe bills against occasional conformity were received with applause by a House of Commons composed chiefly of that party. But the natural inclinations of the Queen yielded to the advice of Marlborough, who though himself a Tory, became convinced that Lord Rochester would not actively support the war, and that the Whigs alone sympathised with the sentiments of King William, as expressed in the last speech that he delivered to his parliament. Feeling that a vigorous opposition to the arms of Louis XIV. could alone save the liberties of Europe, Marlborough advised his mistress to give her countenance to the Whig party. Lord Cowper was made Chancellor, but still the Queen consented, with great reluctance, to the admission into her councils of persons whose politics she detested, and year after year passed in struggles at court to obtain the higher offices of state for Sunderland and Somers. It would not be just to ascribe these demands of the Whig leaders to the mere love of office; their ambition was of a higher kind. They aspired to rule the state according to their own system of policy, and they found that all their efforts were thwarted by the wilful negligence of the Tories, who filled less conspicuous places in the administration. Godolphin tells us, that there was not a Tory in any ministerial office, who did not require to be spoken to ten times over before he would execute any thing that had been ordered, and then it was done with all the difficulty and slowness imaginable.

This conduct so dangerous, if not treasonable, in the midst of a perilous war, certainly goes far to justify the importunity of the Whigs to remove Sir C. Hedges from the post of Secretary of State, in order to give him a more permanent and profitable, but less responsible, office.

The Whigs held their power by a precarious tenure. The Queen, originally adverse to them, was rendered implacable by their haughty invasion of the cabinet; and she was daily excited to little acts of hostility by Mrs. Masham, who had succeeded the Duchess of Marlborough in the friendship and the government of her weak head and ignoble heart. There needed only a popular and plausible occasion for discarding the general who rendered the name of England illustrious by his victories, and the statesman whose reputation was founded equally on his wisdom and his love of liberty. The occasion soon happened; Marlborough and Somers fell; Harley and St. John rose upon their ruin. It is thus that when the statues of gods and heroes are thrown down, snakes and reptiles are obtruded into light.

It must be owned, however, that the Whigs gave a handle to the designs of their enemies. The trial of Dr. Sacheverel was needless and imprudent. Under an established government it was not exceedingly wise to proclaim aloud the doctrine of resistance; nor could there be any great danger in leaving a clergyman of no great station to vaunt his absurdities unmolested. The solemnity of an impeachment, the marshalling of all the forces of the state against a private individual, could not fail to excite afresh that cry in favour of the high church to which the people have been so much inclined at various times in our history, and which ought to have been allowed to sleep in peace. In consequence of the popularity of Sacheverel, and the well-known opinion of the Queen, a House of Commons was obtained completely favourable to the Tories; and here begins the history of those last four years of Queen Anne, in which the press was restrained, intolerance favoured, our allies deserted, our enemies encouraged, and a disadvantageous peace concluded. Indeed, had not Queen Anne died before the measures of the Jacobites were prepared, the Elector of Hanover might never have been able to ascend the throne to which the Act of Settlement had called him.

We have now gone over the struggles of Party during the reigns

of the first two sovereigns who reigned after the Revolution.* They were times in which political integrity was rare, and political animosities violent, but the people was admitted as an umpire between the contending armies; and, upon the whole, the rise and fall of each seems to have been proportioned to its merits. In so saying, I must except the elevation of Harley and of St. John; men who were base enough to flatter Marlborough for the purpose of lulling and supplanting him, ought to have remained in the obscurity in which they were originally placed. With this exception, however, the contest between the two parties was a contest between two lines of policy, in which the welfare of the state was involved, and between two great principles, on one or other of which the foundations of the English government must be made to depend. Men of great talents, vast property and long experience, distinguished themselves on one side or the other; and to whichever party the nation leant, more practical liberty, more personal security and more tranquillity from religious persecution (not to mention fame and consideration abroad) were enjoyed by the people than had ever been known in England.†

Notes of a Conversation with the late John Allen, Esq.,‡ Ampthill Park, Autumn of 1834.

"As long as there are great political questions, respecting which there are differences of opinion, to be a Party-man is to act most honourably."—Right. Hon. Charles Fox. MS. Debates, House of Commons, 1787.

To inveigh against Party as something noxious—to call it faction, is silly. Party mainly produced our constitution, Party preserves it, Party improves it.

* [See the next note.]

† [See Chapter 18 of Lord John Russell's "Essay on the History of the English Government and Constitution." The chapter contains the History of the Whig and Tory Parties during the reigns of William and Mary and of Anne. The noble author has taken for the motto of the chapter a passage in Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV.:—"Un roi fait ailleurs entrer aveuglément ses peuples dans toutes ses vues; mais à Londres un roi doit entrer dans celles de son peuple."]

‡ Lord Byron in one of his Letters describes Mr. Allen as a perfect Magliabecchi, a devourer, a helluo of books.

Lord Brougham, in his Historical Sketches of Statesmen in the time of George III., says of Mr. Allen that he had the rare faculty of combining general views with details of fact, and thus at once availing himself of all that theory or speculation presents for our guide, with all that practical experience affords to correct those results of general reasoning. This great excellence was displayed by him in everything to which he directed his mind, whether it were the political questions of the day, which he treated as practically as the veriest drudge in any of the public offices,

Let those who exclaim against Party reflect upon the consequences of the want of it in France when the first Revolution broke out.* Had Party existed there, such scenes of the Revolution as all agree in condemning would never have been enacted. Party allows not an abandonment of our posts. Party, therefore, would have prevented emigration. There would have been points of union for all men of the principal political creeds. No occasion, no excuse for running away. Junctions might have been effected sufficient in number and in weight to have secured the desired changes, and at the same time to have preserved order. But unhappily France possessed no body of public men resembling the Whigs as they were at the beginning of the last century. * * *

They who allege Party to be of recent growth amongst us are in error. It is nearly 300 years old; but at first the organization was very scanty and incomplete. There was the germ.—Development took place at a later period.

Run through our history from the reign of Elizabeth to the Revolution of 1688. During great part of the time there was an Opposition in the Lords and the Commons; or if not in both, yet in one of them. There was therefore Party. There cannot be an Opposition, properly so called, without Party. There may be opponents; but opponents without Party do not make an Opposition.

In Elizabeth's reign symptoms of an Opposition may be discovered in the Commons. The Puritans were few; but they acted in concert. There was enough of them to make the nucleus of a Party. There was system. There was uniformity of conduct.

and yet with all the enlargement of view which marked the statesman and the philosopher; or the speculations of history, which he studied at once with the acumen that extracts from it as an essence the general progress of our species after the manner of Voltaire and Millar; and with the minute observation of facts and weighing of evidence which we trace through the luminous and picturesque pages of Robertson and Gibbon.

* "Si je me suis servi, jusqu'à present, comme je le ferai, sans doute, encore du mot de parti; c'est faute d'expressions propres aux idées que j'ai voulu rendre: car à cette epoque il n'y avoit point de partis: et je doute qu'en observant, avec attention, tous les mouvements qui se sont succédés, dans les commencemens de la révolution, on puisse s'attacher à rien, à qui ce mot puisse réellement convenir."

"Enfin, parmi les adhérens de ceux à qui on a voulu donner le nom de chefs de parti, a t-on reconnu quelques réunions d'hommes attachés les uns aux autres, et à leur chef, par ces liens imposans qui, de tous les membres, ne forme qu'un tout indissoluble?"

This extract was made in October, 1834, from a work not now within reach.—Memoires du Comte Jos. de Puisay, qui pourront servir à l'Histoire du Parti Royaliste Français durant la dernière Revolution. Londres, 1803. 6 vols. 8vo.

Their words were bold. There was no lack of courage. The Queen's severities checked them only. The little band awaited its opportunity. Half a century elapsed before it came; but at length it came.

* * * * In the last Parliament of Elizabeth the Commons were told by some ridiculously high prerogative lawyer that all their property belonged to the Queen. See how the House took this.† * * * *

In the reign of James, on the one side were the Courtiers; on the other side was the Country Party. * * * *

In the Lords an Opposition was now formed. This was new. It was the Country Party in that House. * * * *

In the Commons the Country Party had great force. It often prevailed in requiring the redress of grievances, the vote of money being in the meantime refused. There were endeavours for a law declaring that no imposition should be lawful without consent of Parliament. The Country Party did not succeed in those endeavours. There was also the Protest of the Country Party respecting the liberties and privileges of Parliament. * * *

The antagonist principles of the two Parties, which in the next reign were arrayed against each other in the field, were proclaimed. Despotism, Tyranny; Limited Monarchy, Freedom, Civil and Religious; Religious Freedom, however imperfect. The Catholics. * * * *

Sometimes, whilst Parliament was sitting, James put members of the Country Party under arrest. Sometimes, when Parliament was dissolved, he committed them to the Tower. * * *

Early in the reign of Charles the First, the Country Party in the Lords assailed the Duke of Buckingham. * * *

In the Commons the Country Party had so increased, that the Courtiers were outnumbered. In this House the Country Party was then formed of the Puritans and the Patriots. On many matters the Puritans and the Patriots did not think alike. Liberty —Constitutional Government—was the connecting link. In such times, perhaps in all times, men in and men out of Parliament ought to choose their Party. Richard Baxter condemned neutrality at

† See post, Appendix B. 43 Eliz. 1601. All the House of Commons hemmed, Serjeant Heyle stating that all they had was the Queen's, and she might lawfully, at her pleasure, take it from them; yea, that she had as much right to all their lands and goods as to any revenue of the Crown.

such a crisis.* Remember the Westminster Assembly of Divines. There were purposes for which Presbyterians, Erastians and Independents could unite—and very properly—forgetting for awhile all their differences. Even the "odium theologicum" could be allayed. By-the-bye, this mention of the Erastians brings to mind the lawyers. Although the Court always found lawyers ready to show the legality of its devices, yet the Country Party had lawyers too equally ready to show the illegality of them; and upon the whole it cannot well be disputed that the constitution is under considerable obligations to the class. Lord John Russell has somewhere a chapter upon the subject.†

The expediency of putting Charles to death has been a good deal discussed. Mr. Fox's Historical Fragment may be looked at.‡ Whatever may be the conclusion arrived at, the question of the necessity and utility of Party in reference to the Constitution cannot be affected by it. The nation ultimately gained much by the Commonwealth. It was taught the advantage of co-operation. It was taught that co-operation could only be brought about by some sacrifice of individual opinion. Besides a love of freedom had arisen which nothing could repress. Party, it may be affirmed, gave birth to this love of freedom. Party kept it alive. There was an ardent desire for government according to defined and known laws. The laws might be indifferent; but if they were so, means would be found of altering them. Party would find the means.

Pass to the Restoration. In the temper in which men's minds then were, an effective Opposition could not be looked for. There were indeed the two parties—Court and Country; but the latter at first existed only in name. * * *

Some of the courtiers laid it down that to take up arms against the king was as criminal as to cut off his head. See how that was received by the House.§

* "I thought it a great sin for men that were able to defend their country to be neuters."—Baxter, His Own Life and Times.

† It is Chapter 15 of his Lordship's "Essay on the History of the English Government and Constitution."

‡ See Appendix B; the Execution of King Charles the First, from Mr. Fox's "History of the Early Part of the Reign of James the Second."

§ See Appendix B. 12 Car. II. 1660. The House of Commons take exception at one Mr. Lenthall saying in a debate, that he who drew his sword against the king committed as high an offence as he that cut off the king's head.

It was only after Lord Shaftesbury's disgrace that a regular and strong Opposition was formed. Enumerate the occurrences in the interval. Nothing can better prove the mischief that may ensue if this part of the constitution be in abeyance. A vigorous opposition is indispensable.

There was first, the affair of the King's Declaration respecting ecclesiastical affairs. The Ministers and the Court Party would not allow it to become law. This many have thought unfortunate for the Church.* There was then, &c. * * *

Dwell a little on these passages in the history of Charles the Second's reign, and it will be apparent that evils innumerable will lift their heads and flourish, if there be not two rival and powerful Parties in the state.

Doubt not that much good comes from the spirit of partisanship. Don't be alarmed at the word * * *

After Lord Shaftesbury's fall there was a formidable minority in the two Houses; Lord Russell, Sir W. Coventry,† Lord Cavendish,‡ Powle,§ Littleton,|| Colonel Birch,¶ in the Commons * * * *

Lord Danby was impeached, and the Parliament, which had sat for seventeen years, was dissolved * * *

Party gave us the Habeas Corpus Act. The credit of it belongs to Shaftesbury, who was not quite so bad as some have represented him.** * * *

* "Never had the chiefs of the Anglican Church a fairer opportunity of conceding with dignity and perfect safety." Vaughan, Memorials of the Stuart Dynasty, vol. 3, p. 303.

† "Sir W. Coventry was the model of a country gentleman, open, honest, and sensible, not swayed either by ambition or animosity." Lord J. R.

‡ "Lord Cavendish, an intimate friend of Lord Russell, had more quickness and talent, and was a very accomplished scholar. He maintained, through a long life, an ardent love of freedom, of which he gave proofs on many occasions." Lord J. R.

§ "Powle was very learned in Parliamentary Reforms." Lord J. R.

|| "Littleton had, more than any other person of his time, that command of historical knowledge, and that skill in argument, which are necessary to form an able speaker of the present-day." Lord J. R.

¶ "Colonel Birch spoke with force and vehemence, and was an excellent debater for a popular assembly, though his language retained somewhat of the roughness of his early habits. Before the civil war he had been a carrier." Lord J. R.

** "Lord Shaftesbury's remarkable sagacity, his readiness in counsel, his boldness in action, and his peculiar skill in adapting his language to the character of those with whom he conversed, gave him an influence with the party that he joined, which cannot be sufficiently lamented. His talents, undoubtedly, added weight to the scale in which he threw them, but his hot and restless temper betrayed his asso-

..We come to the two parties of Petitioners and Abhorrers. Charles was a pensioner of Louis, and had determined to dispense with Parliament. Many of the Peers and others petitioned that Parliament might meet. They were called Petitioners, and soon acquired the designation of Whigs. Many of the clergy and gentry got up Addresses condemning this practice of petitioning as revolutionary. These were called Abhorrers, and soon got the designation of Tories * * *

Lord John Russell, in the Life of his ancestor, has a good account of the Whig and Tory principles at the end of the reign of Charles the Second.† * * *

The accession of James the Second was in 1685. Read Mr. Fox's account of the state of the two parties at that time, the Church or Tory Party and the Whig Party‡ * * *

However the Revolution of 1688 was achieved by the two great parties, Whigs and Tories jointly. The Whigs alone have the credit of the Hanover succession § * * *

Queen Anne had been for some time on the throne before the principle of governing by Party was well understood. Whigs and Tories were admitted to place indiscriminately by William III., and also by Anne, during all the early part of her reign ||.

ciates into measures which prudence cannot justify. And the splendid abilities of Shaftesbury were not able to supply the want of consistency, sincerity, and honesty, without which no public man can obtain in England the confidence of the people either for his party or for himself. It is to be remarked, to the honour of Shaftesbury, that though in the secret of every party, he never betrayed any one; and that the purity of his administration of justice is allowed even by his enemies." Lord J. R.

† See Appendix B. Whigs and Tories. Character of the parties so called from "Lord John Russell's Life of Lord William Russell."

‡ See Appendix B. Character of the Tory Party—Situation of the Whig Party—in the year 1685: from Mr. Fox's "History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II."

§ "If we reflect on the means by which this great event (the Hanover succession) was brought about, we shall see it was almost entirely effected by skilful management on the one side, and the want of it, on the other. The perpetual activity of the Whigs, their vigorous appeals to the nation, and their admirable party discipline, made it extremely difficult for the Jacobites to form any extensive combination, or to prepare the mind of the nation for the change they meditated. On the other hand, the indecision and insincerity of Harley broke his followers into divisions, insomuch that, after four years of power, the Tory Party was declared, by one of its leaders [Bolingbroke] to be dissolved. Perhaps there never was an instance which so clearly demonstrated the importance of political union, and the value of a few able chiefs." Lord John Russell, Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe from the Peace of Utrecht, vol. 1, p. 301, 4to. edition.

|| "A principle established at this time [1710—1716] is that of conducting the government by one party. During the reign of William the Third, and the greater

In the Edinburgh Review there have been occasionally some good remarks upon the subject of Party*.

The Doctrine of Parties and Party Dissensions, from the "Edinburgh Review" of November, 1812.

On the doctrine of parties and party dissensions, it is now too late for us to enter at large; and indeed, when we recollect what Mr. Burke has written upon that subject, we do not know why we should wish for an opportunity of expressing our feeble sentiments. Parties are necessary in all free governments, and are indeed the characteristics by which such governments may be known. One party, that of the rulers or the court, is necessarily formed and disciplined from the permanence of its chief, and the uniformity of the interests it has to maintain;—the party in Opposition, therefore, must be marshalled in the same way. When bad men combine, good men must unite; and it would not be less hopeless for a crowd of worthy citizens to take the field without leaders or discipline, against a regular army, than for individual patriots to think of opposing the influence of the sovereign by their separate and uncombined exertions. As to the lengths which they should be permitted to go in support of the common cause, or the extent to which each ought to submit his private opinion to the general sense of his associates, it does not appear to us, though casuists may mask dishonour, and purists startle at shadows—either that any man of upright feelings can be at a loss for a rule of conduct, or that, in point of fact, there has ever been any blameable excess in the maxims upon which our parties in this country have been generally conducted. The leading principle is, that a

part of that of Anne, the offices of state were divided between the members of the two parties, with a view to conciliate both, and to exclude the more haughty and presumptuous leaders from acquiring a dictation over the sovereign. In the middle of the reign of Anne, the Whigs obtained something like exclusive power; and towards the end of that reign the Tories possessed unbalanced authority; but their hesitation and misconduct totally deprived them of the confidence of the new king, and the Whigs found themselves strong enough to keep out their opponents for nearly half a century. From this time we may observe in the ministry of England, greater unity of views, a more complete confidence among the members of it, and a more uniform policy towards foreign powers."—Lord John Russell, Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe, vol. i. pp. 372, 373.

* See the three ensuing articles of the present Appendix.

man should satisfy himself that the party to which he attaches himself means well to the country, and that more substantial good will accrue to the nation from its coming into power, than from the success of any other body of men whose success is at all within the limits of probability.—Upon this principle, therefore, he will support that party in all things which he approves—in all things that are indifferent—and even in some things which he partly disapproves, provided they neither touch the honour and vital interests of the country, nor imply any breach of the ordinary rules of morality.—Upon the same principle he will attack not only all that he individually disapproves in the conduct of the adversary, but all that might appear indifferent and tolerable enough to a neutral spectator, if it afford an opportunity to weaken him in the public opinion, and to increase the chance of bringing that party into power, from which alone he sincerely believes that any sure or systematic good is to be expected. Farther than this we do not believe that the leaders or respectable followers of any considerable party, intentionally allow themselves to go. Their zeal, indeed, and the heats and passions engendered in the course of the conflict, may sometimes hurry them into measures for which an impartial spectator cannot find this apology; but to their own consciences and honour we are persuaded that they generally stand acquitted;—and on the score of duty or morality, that is all that can be required of human beings. For the baser retainers of the party indeed—those marauders who follow in the rear of every army, not for battle but for booty—who concern themselves in no way about the justness of the quarrel, or the fairness of the field—who plunder the dead and butcher the wounded, and desert the unprosperous and betray the daring;—for those wretches who belong to no party, and are a disgrace and a drawback upon all, we shall assuredly make no apology, nor propose any measures of toleration. The spirit by which they are actuated is the very opposite of that spirit which is generated by the parties of a free people; and accordingly it is among the advocates of arbitrary power that such persons, after they have served their purpose by a pretence of patriotic zeal, are ultimately found to range themselves.

We positively deny, then, that the interests of the country have ever been sacrificed to a vindictive desire to mortify or humble a rival party;—though we freely admit that a great deal of the time and the talent that might be devoted more directly to her service

is wasted in such an endeavour. This, however, is unavoidable—nor is it possible to separate those discussions, which are really necessary to expose the dangers or absurdity of the practical measures proposed by a party, from those which have really no other end but to expose it to general ridicule or odium. This too, however, it should be remembered, is a point in which the country has a still deeper though a more indirect interest than in the former; since it is only by such means that a system that is radically vicious can be exploded, or a set of men fundamentally corrupt and incapable removed. If the time be well spent, therefore, which is occupied in preventing or palliating some particular act of impolicy or oppression, it is impossible to grudge that by which the spring and the fountain of all such acts may be cut off.

With regard to the tumult—the disorder—the danger to public peace—the vexation and discomfort which certain sensitive persons and lovers of tranquillity represent as the fruits of our political dissensions, we cannot help saying that we have no sympathy with their delicacy or their timidity. What they look upon as a frightful commotion of the elements, we consider as no more than a wholesome agitation; and cannot help regarding the contentions in which freemen are engaged by a conscientious zeal for their opinions, as an invigorating and not ungenerous exercise. What breach of the public peace has it occasioned?—to what insurrections, or conspiracies, or proscriptions has it ever given rise?—what mob even, or tumult, has been excited by the contention of the two great parties of the state, since their contention has been open, and their weapons appointed, and their career marked out in the free lists of the constitution?—Suppress these contentions, indeed—forbid these weapons, and shut up these lists, and you will have conspiracies and insurrections enough.—These are the short-sighted fears of tyrants.—The dissensions of a free people are the preventives and not the indications of radical disorder;—and the noises which make the weakhearted tremble, are but the natural murmurs of those mighty and mingling currents of public opinion which are destined to fertilize and unite the country, and can never become dangerous till an attempt is made to dam them up, or to disturb their level.

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The Three Classes or Descriptions of Men into which the House of Commons may be divided. From the Edinburgh Review of June, 1816.

The House of Commons may be divided into three classes or descriptions of men.

The first and most numerous consists of party men, whether attached to ministry or to opposition. By party men, we mean persons who usually act and vote together, in consequence of having certain public principles and opinions in common, which they consider of sufficient importance to be a bond of union; or in consequence of entertaining similar views on great points of foreign and domestic policy. Of this description was the party that opposed the American war; the party that united against Lord Shelburne's peace; the party formed against the Coalition and India Bill; the party that remained united from 1784 to 1792, in maintenance of the ancient authority of the House of Commons; the party that resisted the war of 1793, on the ground that it was an unjustifiable interference with the right of an independent nation to choose its own form of government; the party who supported that war, on the ground that the conduct of the French revolutionists endangered the stability of every government in Europe; and, lastly, the party that remained together in 1807 in support of Catholic emancipation.

The individuals of a party, though agreeing in one common object, often differ widely on other points. The members of the present cabinet are divided on the question of Catholic emancipation. The leading members of opposition took different sides on the renewal of the East India Company's charter. What is called the Whig party has always contained some men friendly to parliamentary reform, and others decidedly hostile to that measure. The party that overthrew the Coalition ministry in 1784 was composed of courtiers, parliamentary reformers and Dissenters. They agreed in one common object, which was to reject the India Bill and turn out the ministry; but differed on every other possible point. Some men follow the general current of their party more steadily than others; and when new and great occasions arise, individuals or bodies of men, who differ from the rest of their party, separate from it entirely, if they conceive the ground of difference to be

of sufficient magnitude and importance to justify the separation. The Duke of Leeds went out of office in 1791, when Mr. Pitt abandoned the views and projects of the triple alliance. The alarmists separated from Mr. Fox in 1793 on account of the difference of their opinions on the French Revolution.

Besides the two great parties of ministry and opposition, there are sometimes small knots of men, united for some object of a public nature, which they steadily pursue amidst the changes of administration, sometimes lending their support to ministry, and sometimes to opposition; but generally voting with the government. Of this description is a well known party in the House of Commons, distinguished by their zeal and perseverance for the abolition of the African slave trade. There are also now and then small squads of a different sort, who make no profession of any community of principle or opinion, but are united by some common views of interest, which they conceive may be more effectually promoted by keeping together, than by acting separately. These men lie in wait for some temporary weakness or unpopularity of the government, and, taking advantage of their opportunity, sometimes by loud opposition, but more frequently by secret intrigue, get admission into the ministry, and procure for themselves and their dependants a large share of honours and emoluments from men, who are ready to sacrifice a part, rather than lose the whole. Such a party, or rather faction, is a mere association of political adventurers, who prefer extortion to importunity, and calculate that more is to be got by menacing the treasury in a body, than by bargaining with it singly.

The second class into which we should divide the members of the House of Commons, consists of persons who vote, in general, with the existing government, of whatever materials it may be composed; either from an opinion that the king's government, however constituted, ought in general to be supported; or from a desire of procuring for themselves and friends a share of the patronage which ministers have to give. The first is a Tory principle; and, though it appears to us a mistaken sense of duty, it is so far deserving of respect, that the persons who act upon it, though narrow-minded, are often disinterested men. The latter description of persons form the worst and least respectable members of the House. When the conduct of ministers leads to great public calamities, their Tory supporters usually begin to manifest

their disapprobation by absenting themselves from pinching and unpopular questions; and it is only after repeated hints of this sort, and the most thorough conviction that ministers are incorrigibly bent on pursuing the same pernicious courses, that these gentlemen are ever brought decidedly and steadily to vote against them. The second class, on the contrary, are uncommonly alert in discerning the signs of the times; and when a minister begins to totter, whether from losing the favour of the Court, or the confidence of the House, they are usually the loudest and most violent against him, in the hopes of recommending themselves to his successor for a still more liberal distribution of favours and patronage.

The third class consists of single individuals, of more vanity in general than talent, who make great pretensions to independence, and boast that on every question they are guided by their own solitary judgment and opinion. Men of this sort are sometimes of importance in the House, when parties are nearly balanced, and Tories and jobbers are doubtful which way to turn themselves. As they are seldom men of solid judgment, when their independence is not a match for other purposes, there is no inconsistency of which they are incapable. They will vote for war to-day, and refuse the supplies to carry it on to-morrow. Their numbers, in general small, are occasionally reinforced by some discontented party man, who quits the ranks of ministry or opposition without the pretence of any difference on public grounds, because he fancies his talents and importance underrated, or thinks his speeches not sufficiently cheered, or his conversation not enough listened to and admired. The half-way house for such travellers is this limbo of vanity, from which they gradually sink into jobbing, or dwindle into insignificance.

The True Principle of Party Connexions, from the "Edinburgh Review" of June, 1818.

When a number of men associate themselves from a general agreement in political opinion, and pursue in one body a certain course of measures, it is extremely common to hear them accused of various crimes. If they attack the Government of the day, they are by its friends stigmatized as disloyal, by aid of the established sophism which confounds the Sovereign with his counsellors—the

constitution with the ministry of the day. By the people, they are apt to be regarded as prosecuting their own interests; and only desirous of changing the present servants of the Crown, to take their places. Even the more thinking classes of the community, unconnected with Government, are apt to see something factious in a systematic opposition; it seems as if men, and not measures, were the criterion of praise or blame; as if the same persons would approve the same propositions, which they now most loudly condemned, were they but made by their own chiefs. The common question is, are the Ministers always in the wrong? And an inference is thus drawn by those who say they retain the unbiassed exercise of their own judgment, that there is almost as great a sacrifice of conscience in always agreeing with an opposition as in constantly supporting a minister. It is the interest, and the never failing practice of the Government, to encourage such notions;—the minister has no better friends than those who rail at all party as an interested and factious league of place hunters or zealots—nor any more useful resources than in the number of well-meaning and not very clear-sighted persons, who, from tender consciences, or perhaps from the vanity of always thinking for themselves, keep aloof from party connexion as unprincipled and degrading.

Another charge against party arises out of the coalitions which, from time to time, are framed between men of different political connexions, who have once been opposed to each other. No more fruitful source can be assigned of the prejudices which have been conceived against various parties, and of the general disposition, which for a long while has existed, to question the purity of public men generally. As superficial observers cannot comprehend the principle which unites individuals together in political co-operation, or conceive how a man may, to promote a just cause, overlook slighter differences of opinion, and act with those of whom he does not in every particular approve—so the same reasoners find it still more difficult to understand on what grounds persons, long inveterately hostile, can unite when circumstances are changed: and as party union is termed a combination for power or place, and party hostility a factious scramble, so a coalition of parties is deemed a profligate abandonment of public principle for private advantage. The two most celebrated measures of this kind, in more modern times, have given rise to an infinity of such feelings in the public mind.

The last cause we shall here state, of the odium that has lately fallen upon party, is the conduct almost inevitably pursued by every opposition, upon its accession to power, and the disappointment arising from thence, both to the public and to individuals. How sparing soever an opposition may be of their promises to the country, far more will always be expected of them than any man can perform. Whatever has been done amiss by the former Ministry, they are called upon to rectify, and instantly—for delay is held equal to nonperformance. At all events, they are not suffered to continue for one moment in the steps which they had blamed their predecessors for pursuing; although it may be perfectly consistent in those who inveighed against a measure to persevere in it, when once adopted, as the lesser evil; or, if resolved upon abandoning it, to do this cautiously and slowly. The heedless multitude however cry out, that the new men are just as bad as the old, and would always have acted like them, had they been in their place. And hence a new topic for those whose clamour is, that all public men are alike. In the meantime, the impossibility of satisfying the private claims of those who follow the party for the sake of its patronage, fills the ranks of the discontented; and the loss of power having disarmed the popular indignation against the fallen Ministry, public censure is almost exclusively reserved for their successors. These, too, are for a long time regarded rather as an opposition, inexpertly converted into ministers, than as regular placemen; and the dislikes excited by whatever they do, or leave undone, tinge the public opinion respecting opposition parties in general. These appear to us the principal sources of the unpopularity into which regular party has fallen.

We are very far indeed from denying, that there have been, in all times, abuses of the principle which justifies party union—or that most parties, in their turn, have had errors and crimes to answer for, which afford some colour to the charges indiscriminately made against them all. We may even admit, that, unless strictly watched and controlled by the great check of public opinion, party association is apt to degenerate and produce serious evils, by its perversion to purposes of a private nature. Nevertheless, we conceive that the plan of acting in parties has its foundation in the necessity of the case, and that it affords the only safe and practical means of carrying on the business of a free country—not, as ignorant men imagine, by a collusion between different juntos of men, but by a mode

once peaceful and effectual, of giving their full influence to different principles. Let us then attend to the ground upon which alone such associations are to be defended.

As long as men are ambitious, corrupt and servile, every sovereign will attempt to extend his power; he will easily find instruments wherewithal to carry on this bad work; if unresisted, his encroachments upon public liberty will go on with an accelerated swiftness, each step affording new facilities for making another stride, and furnishing additional confidence to attempt it. It requires no argument, then, to show the absolute necessity of strictly watching every administration at all times. But if any given set of ministers has adopted a system of government grossly erroneous, or corrupt or unconstitutional, a necessity arises for taking every lawful means to displace them, and prevent further mischief. The question is, how can they be most effectually watched in the one case, and opposed in the other? Now we must consider the means of supporting themselves, which all ministers have, and the power which is thus afforded them of eluding the vigilance and overcoming the resistance of insulated individuals. Every ministry is necessarily a league—a party—a party, too, regularly marshalled, and kept together in one solid body,—as much more compact than the best organized opposition, as a standing army is better disciplined than a corps of volunteers. The ministers have all the force and all the influence of Government at their disposal. The fears of some, the hopes of others, range around them a vast host of persons whom they can dispose of at pleasure, without ever consulting their wishes. It is enough for those multitudes that the Government wills anything, and straightway they feel themselves bound strenuously to promote it. Add to this, the strength derived from the good will, and often the co-operation, of a great and even respectable class, who give themselves little trouble to inquire into the merits of measures, but are resolved to believe that whatever the minister for the time being says or does is right. When persons of little reflection or no candour cry out against an opposition as factious; inveigh against party spirit; and ask how any honest man can give up the guidance of his conscience, and follow implicitly the steps of his political leaders,—how comes it that they forget the far more implicit obedience rendered to the minister of the day, by the whole host of Government dependants? They are indeed knit together by an inseparable bond—their common interest; theirs is an un-

scrupulous, an uninquiring, an unthinking compliance with all that their chief prescribes. If the charge of unconscientious agreement in opinion, or blind submission to other men, applies to any class, it clearly does to those whom the power of the Government commands, or its patronage influences. If the opposers of the Government must be accused of violence and rancour, its supporters are equally open to the charge of tyranny and persecution. Nor will it avail the enemies of all party, to say that they blame both sides, and would have no regular discipline in either. By the nature of the case, there must be a party, regularly disciplined and paid, for the minister of the day. As long as self-interest has any influence over men's minds at least, this party must, of necessity, exist at all times. The question therefore is not, whether we shall do without any such unions, but whether we shall suffer them all to be on one side, and shall not have recourse to something of the same system and combination for watching and for opposing the ministerial party, which that party always uses for retaining its power, and almost always for augmenting the power of the Crown, and increasing the burthens of the people.

Now it seems very manifest, that, without some systematic co-operation, no Ministry can be either watched or opposed effectually. The argument applies, in different degrees, both to the vigilance which all Administrations require, and the opposition which should be given to counsels radically vicious; and as it is of course strongest in the latter case, we shall principally direct our attention to that. Compare, then, the chance of success which a Ministry and an Opposition, composed of insulated individuals, would have. All the adherents of the minister act in concert, and each sacrifices his own opinions and views, where they clash with the common object of defending their leader's place. If he proposes a measure which many of them disapprove, still they support him, because the loss of it would endanger his official existence. But if his opponents only attack him when they are all agreed upon the measure, they must, for the same reason, make the attack in the manner which all approve; that is to say, only those who agree in disapproving of the measure can join the attack, and of those, only such as concur in the way of expressing their dissent. It is not merely that one man may be influenced by one reason, and another by another, to join in the same vote; this would lead to no material defalcation of strength. But there will be found very

few votes in which all are precisely agreed; and if each man must follow his own judgment for conscience sake, even a small difference of sentiment must prevent a concurrence in the vote. Thus it will happen that the whole body who disapprove of the measures of Government as a system, and conscientiously deem a change necessary, are prevented from ever expressing that opinion at all. There might even be a clear majority against the Government, and yet no change could be effected.

Let the nature of the co-operation which party requires be only considered fairly, and it will appear in no respect to involve sacrifices beyond what the most scrupulous ought to make. A number of individuals agree in holding many strong opinions upon the most important subjects. Unless there exists this general communion of sentiments, the party ought not to be formed. They all agree in holding a change of system necessary for the salvation of the country; for if they only unite to bring about a change of men, we admit the conflict to be a mere scramble for power. Agreeing generally, and on important points, each man has differences of opinion as to the details; but the corner stone of the whole fabric being the unanimous concurrence in thinking that a change of system is necessary, and the adoption of some one line of opposition being essentially to accomplish this end, it is no sacrifice of individual opinions, but only acting in conformity with the most important opinion to sacrifice the less important; and to act otherwise would in reality be a much greater sacrifice of individual opinion. In truth, this is the way in which every man carries on his private affairs; and it is precisely the principle on which all communities depend for their existence. The power of the majority to bind the whole rests upon no other foundation. Does any man deem it unconscientious to submit to a bad law after it is passed, though he resisted its introduction? Unless in extreme cases, when all government is at an end, it is the duty of every man to yield obedience, and to co-operate in carrying into effect measures which, while under discussion, he had opposed, because a still greater evil would ensue from his continued opposition, namely, the dissolution of society. So in a party, it is a man's duty to co-operate with the whole body after his peculiar views have been overruled, because otherwise a still greater evil would result, namely, the establishment for ever of the bad system, which all agree ought to be changed. Extreme cases may arise here, as in the community at large; questions of

paramount importance may interfere, upon which the differences of opinion are too great to be overcome, and a total or partial destruction of the union may be the result. But, in ordinary cases, the yielding in small matters for the sake of greater ones is not only no abandonment of private opinion, but is the only way in which that opinion can be effectually pronounced and pursued.

It is thus essentially necessary to regard every measure, whether proposed by the Government or their opponents, not merely on its own merits, but in connection with the men who bring it forward, and the system of which it forms a part. Some questions, indeed, are of such paramount importance, and rest upon grounds so plain, that no compromise can be admitted in respect to them. But by far the greater number of those which come into discussion, must be viewed in the relations just now mentioned. Suppose a measure, in itself good, is propounded by a set of Ministers whose whole conduct is at variance with its principles,—whose good faith in executing it cannot be trusted, and who may, independent of bad intentions, have no power to do its merits full justice,—a man may most conscientiously resist the proposition; and he is liable to no charge of factious conduct or of inconsistency, if he object to it in the hands of one class of statesmen, and afterwards approve of it in those of another and better description. It is rational and just to distinguish between different classes of Ministers, and approve or disapprove of their systems; to grant the one our confidence, while we distrust the other. Let us only take a few instances, in order to demonstrate how senseless the clamour is which we see raised against party, upon the ground that measures only, and not men, should be the subject of deliberation and of choice.

There are some powers so hostile to liberty, and some resources so tempting to human weakness, that no Ministers whatever ought to be entrusted with them. Thus, a large standing army, an income tax, or the suspension of the constitution even for a short time, though far more dangerous under rulers of arbitrary principles, lovers of war and despisers of economy, can never be safely resorted to, whoever may be entrusted with the management of public affairs. But many lesser resources may be conceived which a politician might reasonably and honestly be afraid of confiding to men whose avowed principles would lead to the abuse of the grant, and yet might not be prepared to refuse to a more constitutional

and economical government. In like manner, a measure for completing the abolition of the Slave Trade must be supported by men of all Parties who agree in disapproving of that traffic, without regard to the quarter from whence the proposition comes; but an honest and rational abolitionist must feel very suspicious of whatever is done in this cause by men who were always the great patrons of the trade, and who clung to its last remains, with the eagerness of African merchants, at the moment when the voice of the whole people was raised to put it down. The same law becomes a very different thing, if its execution is left in the hands of an enemy to its principles and spirit; and almost every branch of public policy is connected with proceedings which must of necessity be entrusted to the servants of the executive Government, and with events for which no legislative arrangement can provide. Thus some very worthy, but mistaken abolitionists, who had flattered themselves that the law being once made, no Ministers would dare to show any slackness in executing it, have been somewhat staggered always to find in the colony department an avowed advocate of the West Indian body, and frequently to see in the colonies most exposed to slave trading official men not very hostile to the traffic; nor were they much edified to find the interests of the abolition wholly overlooked in the first peace with France, though the loud and unanimous reprobation of the country soon forced the subject upon the attention of Ministers, once the avowed patrons, and now the zealous enemies of the traffic. The state of Ireland affords another illustration. The injudicious supporters of the Catholic claims often rank themselves with the promoters of the outcry against party connection. Yet who can deny that the Catholic question itself, if carried, would confer fewer advantages on Ireland, nay fewer immunities or benefits on the Catholic body, than the establishment of a Ministry honestly and anxiously disposed to allay all sectarian animosities, and to give the Catholics the whole advantage of the law as it at present stands? While the professed enemies of that sect bear sway, and while one of the grounds of the preference shown to them by the Crown is their inveterate hostility to the Catholic claims, it is manifest that emancipation itself, if carried, would amend the situation of the sister kingdom in little more than the name. A wise Ministry, friendly to that body, was endeavouring in 1806 and 1807 to improve their condition by all practical favours, which under the existing laws could be shown to

them, and to pave the way by gradual relaxations for the complete repeal of the penal code. Like the abolitionists, the violent Catholics cried out, "Measures, not men;" and, joining in the attack which their worst enemies made upon their best friends, they have had eleven or twelve years of oppression to warn them how they suffer themselves again to be blindly leagued against their own interests. The great subject of Economical Reform affords another illustration of the same doctrine. The extreme necessities of the country, and the loud cry which has gone forth from the whole people for retrenchment, has compelled the Ministry to make some show of reformation in this particular. But as they are the known enemies of every such change,—as their principle is to extend rather than diminish the royal patronage,—as their practice has been the indulgence of unexampled profusion in every branch of the public expenditure,—no man of common sense could expect to see the cause of Economy thrive in their hands; and none but an idiot can have been disappointed at seeing how little has been effected by them in producing a saving of expense. Whatever relief the people have obtained from their burthens is due to their own vehement determination to shake them off, and has been wrung from the gripe of their rulers in spite of the strongest efforts which could be made to retain the load upon the people's back. Generally speaking, a Minister favourable to the country,—friendly to national reforms, and despising patronage, would have carried through a variety of improvements which none but Ministers can accomplish, and would have seized every practicable opportunity of retrenchment which the circumstances of the times afforded, independently of legislative enactments.

We trust that enough has been said to show how honestly and how rationally a public man, may withhold his support systematically from one class of statesmen and co-operate generally with another. Hitherto we have only spoken of the principle of party union, as liable to be questioned by persons of tender consciences, or guided by original views of policy. But two other classes also take a part in such associations, whose co-operation is not to be rejected, although the motives of the one and the faculties of the other may be less respectable. Self-interest, which leagues so many with the government, may rank too some with its opponents; and a number of persons who have sense and information enough to see which side they should, upon the whole, prefer, may be very far from

possessing the power to form an enlightened opinion upon each measure that is discussed. There is no reason whatever why the aid of both these classes should not be received; nor is it the slightest imputation, either upon the chiefs or their cause, to seek such co-operation. The Ministry can only be effectually resisted by such means—the Ministry, round whom such hosts are rallied by all the basest propensities of our nature, and whose cause is supported too by the ignorance, the weakness and the servility of multitudes. One of the great advantages of party union is, that it arrays in strength against bad rulers, numberless individuals who, if left alone, are too weak to produce any effect; and that it brings good out of evil by turning the weaknesses and even the vices of mankind to the account of the country's cause. When we see by what means and by what persons the worst of ministers is always sure to be backed, can there be a more deplorable infatuation than theirs, who would fain see him displaced for the salvation of the state, and yet scruple to obtain assistance in the just warfare waged against him from every feeling and motive and principle that can induce any one to join in the struggle? Always reflecting on the fearful odds against the people, who can seriously maintain that we ought nicely to investigate the grounds of each man's support who is willing to take our part? Who so silly as to ask whether one person is encouraged by his hopes—another by his vanity—a third by his love of action—or to criticize this movement of the public mind, as tinged with enthusiasm, and that, as somewhat extravagant? While men are men these frailties must show themselves in all they do; and the wiseacres or puritans who object to a party for availing itself of every support without asking to what it may be owing, only contend in reality that the whole of those frailties should be marshalled on one side. This is, in truth, the perpetual error into which the enemies of party fall. The interested declaimers against its principles know it full well; and the well meaning purist unintentionally lends himself to the artifice In a word, as every ministry is sure of all the benefits of party union at all times, he who cries out against faction only means that there shall be one faction unopposed. He commits the same error with the very amicable, but not very practical sect, who deny the right of self-defence, and forget that unless all men were converted into Friends, their doctrine would end in the extirpation of half the human race.

We have said enough, and perhaps more than enough, on this

subject. Yet we cannot resist the temptation of transcribing a few lines from an author, whose genius entitles him to the highest regard from readers of every description, and whose political partialities may probably recommend him still more strongly to those who might be disposed to distrust our ratiocinations. Mr. Burke, in the most temperate, elaborate and deeply weighed of all his political publications, has the following admirable remarks on the subject of which we are now treating. "That connexion and faction are equivalent terms, &c." [See before, page 1.]

Near akin to the last topic on which we have touched is the benefit derived to the cause of sound and liberal principles by aristocratical influence being enlisted in the ranks of party. The power of great families is indeed a most necessary part of the array to which the people must look for their security against misgovernment. It is in vain to stigmatize this co-operation as the influence of a domineering aristocracy; to assert that the whole is a contention of grandees; and to pretend that the power of one is better than that of an oligarchy. Such are the clamours cunningly raised by the minions of arbitrary power; scarcely with less wickedness echoed by the wild fury of demagogues, and senselessly listened to by the unthinking rabble. But this description of persons is daily lessening in number as the education of the poor advances; the delusion is therefore losing its influence, and the undue power of the crown must soon be deprived of its best allies, the mob and their leaders. Every man of sense has long been convinced that no two things can be more widely different than the wholesome and natural influence of the aristocracy in a political party, and the vicious form of national government which is known by the same name. That influence can only be exerted by the free will of the party and the people whose leaders and advocates those great families are. As soon as the common operations of the party have raised them to power, they are subject to all the checks and control which the frame of our constitution has provided, and which renders all danger from aristocratic influence wholly chimerical. But in connexion with the party whose principles they share and whose confidence they enjoy, those families exercise a large and a salutary influence. They afford a counterpoise from their wealth, rank and station to the resources of force and corruption at the crown's disposal; they are a rallying point to the scattered strength of the inferior partisans, and a more permanent mass in which the common

principles may be embodied and preserved among the vicissitudes of fortune; and, in the lapse of time, so apt to have a fatal effect among the more fickle and more numerous orders of society, they are eminently useful in tempering the zeal as well as in fixing the unsteadiness of popular opinion, and thus give regulation and direction as well as efficacy to the voice and the strength of the people.

We are very far from wishing to deny that the principle of party association has ever been abused; and the perversion of it has most frequently been in the combinations of great families, united by no distinguishing opinions, and opposing the government upon no very intelligible grounds. The object in these cases seems rather to have been the distribution of patronage; and the point of difference with the Ministry was sometimes nothing more important to the community than the particular channels in which royal favour should flow. In such times as those, Swift might well be allowed to rail and to laugh at party and to term it the 'madness of many for the gain of a few.' But in the present times such a perversion of the principle is quite impossible. The powerful families are aware that they can only retain their influence in the country by acting upon high public grounds. The charge, indeed, to which they have been most exposed, is that of standing on too lofty ground and refusing office when it was within their reach, because they could not obtain it with a recognition of their own opinions upon certain important questions of state. Certain it is that a hankering after place never was so little the failing of an opposition as in our times.

As aristocratical influence has sometimes been abused, so it is impossible to deny that coalitions of parties have been formed repugnant to the universal feelings of the country, and, however justifiable upon principle, yet reprehensible in point of prudence—for this reason, that the general sense of the people could not be reconciled to them. The union of Mr. Fox and Lord North, at the close of the American war, was a measure of this description; and its effects in alienating the public mind from these political leaders were very unfortunate. Yet, that coalitions may be formed most honestly, and that the public good may frequently require them, is abundantly manifest. They are recommended by the same views which prescribe the formation of any one party, namely, the necessity of uniting together all who agree on certain highly important questions and of sacrificing minor differences in order to

secure some grand point for the country. If two parties have been long opposed, and the grounds of their difference were removed by the course of events, there can be no reason whatever for their not forming a junction in order to oppose effectually some third party, the success of which is deemed by them both to be pernicious to the commonweal. The coalition in such a case is only a sacrifice of private animosities to the public good. No doubt unions of this description may very probably lead to a great embarrassment when their primary object is gained, for it is possible that the two parties may agree in little more than in the necessity of a change; so that when they come to act together in office, the views of each may hamper the other, and a feeble government of concessions and compromises and half measures may be established. But this is only a reason for carefully examining the grounds of the coalition, and coming, in the first instance, to a full undertanding upon all other views of policy; it is no argument against coalitions generally, and most certainly it affords no ground of invective against party in the abstract.

There is just as little reason for such invectives furnished by the inevitable consequences of a successful opposition, namely, the accession to power of those engaged in it. This event was the avowed object of their operations; not for the sake of the emoluments and patronage connected with office, but for the sake of the principles which they professed, and which could only be carried into effect by the change of ministry. To rescue the country from the hands of men who were misgoverning and ruining it, and to place its affairs in the hands of men whose integrity was greater, and whose views of policy were sounder, this was the avowed object of the party. In pursuing this object much good service may indeed have been rendered to the state incidentally—many useful measures forced upon the ministers—many pernicious attempts defeated—many bad schemes prevented from being even tried; all these successes would have been of great and lasting benefit to the country, even if the main object had failed, and the change of government had never been effected; and all these advantages to the state would have been the legitimate fruits of party in the strictest sense of the word. But a more extensive and permanent corrective to misrule was wanting; the country was to be saved from men whose principles were hurtful to its best interests, in order to be ruled by those who could safely be trusted with them. Can any clamour,

then, be more vulgar or senseless than theirs who abuse, as place-hunters, the men who have been raised to power by the triumph of their own principles? Can any thing be more absurd than to oppose a ministry, and seek its downfal, for the mere sake of destroying it without putting any other in its place? The formation of a ministry on purer principles, composed of more trustworthy men, is the only legitimate object of all constitutional opposition. Whoever takes office on this ground acts a truly patriotic part. He only can be charged with hunting after place, who assumes, for factious purposes, principles that do not belong to him; or abandons those which he had professed, when the avenues to office are within his view. Here, again, we must avail ourselves of the just and dignified expressions of Burke. "Party is a body of men," &c. [See before, p. 6.]

Of the imputations cast upon party men for deserting their followers or their principles when they take office, it is the less necessary to speak at large; because as soon as they have the government in their hands, they ought to be closely watched, and are pretty sure to be so, by those whom they have displaced. Nor would there fail, in these times, to arise a third party for the interests of the people, if their present defenders were to forget themselves when in office, and to league with the advocates of unconstitutional measures. The risk would be considerable of the new opposition rather encouraging than checking such a dereliction of duty. They followed this course during the year 1806, when the country had not the benefit of a constitutional opposition. But the immediate formation of a third party, out of doors, would, in this case, be irresistible, and it would speedily find itself represented in Parliament, or would push its representatives into that assembly. The more imminent hazard is of an opposite description. Too much, and in too short a time, is expected to be performed by the new and popular ministers. Sufficient time is not allowed them to redeem their pledges. If they do not at once attempt all they promised, they are apt to be deserted by many well-meaning but weak adherents; and they are thus disarmed of the power to do much of the good service they might render the public, by its impatience for objects unattainable, or only to be achieved in the course of time. Nothing is so true as Adam Smith's remark, that one of the worst consequences of the mercantile system in political economy, is its creating an unnatural state of things, which makes it impossible to

correct the errors committed without, for a while, occasioning greater evil than that which you seek to remedy. The same observation is equally applicable to every other species of maladministration; and it points out the unreasonableness of those who will give no time to a new government to retrace the false steps of their predecessors; but, mistaking a prudent and necessary caution for reluctance, launch at them the charge of deserting their principles, and accuse them of intending to do nothing, because they cannot perform miracles, and wished not to work mischief.

The short administration of 1806 was most unjustly treated in this respect. They were about a year in office, with the king, and the whole court strongly against them; sometimes openly opposing their measures; always secretly undermining them in the very unequal warfare of stratagem and intrigue. From the motley composition of that cabinet several errors were committed, and some opportunities of doing good may have been thrown away. But where is the ministry that ever did so much for the country in so short a space of time? They introduced, upon sound and enlightened principles a new military system; they raised the revenue to meet the extravagant demands occasioned by the improvident schemes of their predecessors, until they could retrace their steps, and relieve the people by economy and by peace; they began those inquiries into public expenditure which have since, in spite of their successors, produced a material saving to the country, and which, had they continued in power, would, ere now, have effectually relieved its burthens; they laid the foundations of peace with America, and of tranquillity in Ireland; finally, they abolished the Slave Trade, which had grown up to a horrible maturity under the forcing hand of Mr. Pitt's eloquent invectives, and which he, in the plenitude of his authority, had never ventured even to abridge. Can anything be more unjust than to account all this as nothing, when we reflect that it was crowded into the short space of one year, and that the first year of a change, when the blunders of the former ministry were still producing their most noxious effects in new wars abroad, and failures at home, and when the men recently advanced to power had to contend with a hostile court, a suspicious and unfriendly Parliament, and a jealous, discontented, and burthened people? The history of that short period, while it may prove in many particulars useful as a lesson of errors to be in future avoided, ought also to console the country by the evidence it affords of how much real

ervice might be rendered to its best interests by honest and able inisters enjoying the confidence of the people.

There is one ground of invective against party, to which we have ot yet adverted, because we believe it to be the least solid of any. ome timid persons are wont to apprehend violence and turbulence om what they term factious proceedings. There seems to be a eat mistake in this view of the matter. The fuel of popular dis-ntent exists independent of all party, in the ignorance of the ltitude, the distresses of the times, and the misconduct of the vernment. The formation of a regular and respectable party to intain the cause of the people, instead of blowing up the flame, l causing an explosion, is rather likely to moderate its violence, l give it a safe vent. Besides, there exists, at all events, a regular ty for the government; and if it is not opposed by a similar e, it will either destroy public liberty, or go on encroaching on people's rights, until a popular commotion, under no regulation control, disturbs the public peace, and perhaps subverts the ernment.

APPENDIX (B).

43 *Eliz.* 1601. *All the House of Commons hemmed, Serjeant Heyle stating all that they had was the Queen's, and she might lawfully, at her Pleasure, take it from them; yea, that she had as much Right to all their Lands and Goods as to any Revenue of the Crown.*

Serjeant Heyle.—"Mr. Speaker, I marvel much that the House will stand upon granting of a subsidy, or the time of payment, when all we have is her Majesty's; and she may lawfully, at her pleasure, take it from us; yea, she hath as much right to all our lands and goods as to any revenue of her crown." At which all the House hemmed, and laughed and talked. "Well," quoth Serjeant Heyle, "all your hemming shall not put me out of countenance." So Mr. Speaker stood up and said, "It is a great disorder that this should be used; for it is the ancient use of every man to be silent when any one speaketh; and he that is speaking should be suffered to deliver his mind without interruption." So the Serjeant proceeded, and when he had spoken a little while the House hemmed again, and so he sat down. In his latter speech he said, "He could prove his former position by precedent in the times of Hen. III., King John, King Stephen, &c.," which was the occasion of their hemming.

Mr. Montague said, "That there were no such precedents; and if all preambles of subsidies were looked upon, he should find it were of free gift. And although her Majesty requireth this at our hands, yet it is in us to give, not in her to exact of duty. And for the precedents there be none such, but touching a tenth fleece of wool, and a tenth sheaf of corn that was granted to

Edw. III. at his going to the conquest of France; because all the money then in the land, to be levied by way of subsidy, would not be any way answerable to raise that great mass he desired. And so, having these tenths, he sold them to private men to gain that subsidy, and so raised money to himself for his enterprise."—Parl. Hist. Vol. 1, p. 921.

The Execution of King Charles I.; from Mr. Fox's History of the early Part of the Reign of James II.

This exemplary act of substantial justice, as it has been called by some, of enormous wickedness by others, must be considered in two points of view. First, was it not in itself just and necessary? Secondly, was the example of it likely to be salutary or pernicious? In regard to the first of these questions, Mr. Hume, not perhaps intentionally, makes the best justification of it by saying, that while Charles lived, the projected republic could never be secure. But to justify taking away the life of an individual upon the principle of self-defence, the danger must be not problematical and remote, but evident and immediate. The danger in this instance was not of such a nature; and the imprisonment, or even banishment, of Charles, might have given to the republic such a degree of security as any government ought to be content with. It must be confessed, however, on the other side, that if the republican government had suffered the king to escape, it would have been an act of justice and generosity wholly unexampled; and to have granted him even his life, would have been one among the more rare efforts of virtue. The short interval between the deposal and death of princes is become proverbial; and though there may be some few examples on the other side, as far as life is concerned, I doubt whether a single instance can be found, where liberty has been granted to a deposed monarch. Among the modes of destroying persons in such a situation, there can be little doubt but that adopted by Cromwell and his adherents is the least dishonourable. Edward the Second, Richard the Second, Henry the Sixth, Edward the Fifth, had none of them long survived their deposal; but this was the first instance, in our history at least, where, of such an act, it could be truly said, that it was not done in a corner.

As to the second question, whether the advantage to be derived

from the example was such as to justify an act of such violence, it appears to me to be a complete solution of it to observe, that with respect to England (and I know not upon what ground we assume to set examples for other nations, or in other words, to take the criminal justice of the world into our hands), it was wholly needless, and therefore unjustifiable, to set one for kings, at a time when it was intended the office of king should be abolished, and consequently, that no person should be in the situation to make it the rule of his conduct. Besides, the miseries attendant upon a deposed monarch, seem to be sufficient to deter any prince, who thinks of consequences, from running the risk of being placed in such a situation; or, if death be the only evil that can deter him, the fate of former tyrants deposed by their subjects would by no means encourage him to hope he could avoid even that catastrophe. As far as we can judge from the event, the example was certainly not very effectual, since both the sons of Charles, though having their father's fate before their eyes, yet feared not to violate the liberties of the people even more than he had attempted to do.

If we consider this question of example in a more extended view, and look to the general effect produced upon the minds of men, it cannot be doubted but the opportunity thus given to Charles, to display his firmness and piety, has created more respect for his memory than it could otherwise have obtained. Respect and pity for the sufferer on one hand, and hatred to his enemies on the other, soon produce favour and aversion to their respective causes; and thus, even though it should be admitted (which is doubtful) that some advantage may have been gained to the cause of liberty by the terror of the example operating upon the minds of princes, such advantage is far outweighed by the zeal which admiration for virtue and pity for sufferings, the best passions of the human heart, have excited in favour of the royal cause. It has been thought dangerous to the morals of mankind, even in fiction and romance, to make us sympathize with characters whose general conduct is blameable; but how much greater must the effect be when in real history our feelings are interested in favour of a monarch with whom, at the least, his subjects were obliged to contend in arms for their liberty? After all, however, notwithstanding what the most reasonable part of mankind may think upon this question, it is much to be doubted whether this singular proceeding has not, as much as any other circumstance, served to raise the character of

English nation in the opinion of Europe in general. He who has read, and still more, he who has heard in conversation, discussions upon this subject by foreigners, must have perceived, that, even in the minds of those who condemn the act, the impression made by it has been far more that of respect and admiration than that of disgust and horror. The truth is, that the guilt of the action, that is to say, the taking away the life of the king, is what most men in the place of Cromwell and his associates would have incurred; what there is of splendour and of magnanimity in it, I mean the publicity and solemnity of the act, is what few would be capable of displaying. It is a degrading fact to human nature, that even the sending away of the Duke of Gloucester was an instance of generosity almost unexampled in the history of transactions of this nature.

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12 *Car. II.* 1660. *The House of Commons take Exception at one Mr. Lenthall saying in a Debate, that he who drew his sword against the King committed as high an offence as he that cut off the King's head.*

One Mr. Lenthall, a member of the House, happening to speak to the debate on the Bill of Indemnity, said, 'He that drew his sword against the king committed as high an offence as he that cut off the king's head.' Exception was taken at these words, and Mr. Lenthall was ordered to the bar; when the Speaker, by order of the House, gave him the following reprimand: 'Mr. Lenthall, the House hath taken very great offence at some words you have let fall upon debate of this business of the Bill of Indemnity; which, in the judgment of this House, hath as high a reflection on the justice and proceedings of the Lords and Commons, in the last Parliament, in their actings before 1648, as could be expressed. They apprehend there is much of poison in the words, and that they were spoken out of design to set this House on fire; they tending to render them that drew the sword to bring delinquents to condign punishment, and to vindicate their just liberties, into hatred with them that cut off the king's head; of which act they express their abhorrence and detestation, appealing to God, and their conscience bearing them witness, that they had no thoughts

against his person, much less against his life. Therefore I am commanded to let you know, that had these words fallen out at any other time but in this Parliament, or at any time in this Parliament but when they had considerations of mercy, pardon and indemnity, you might have expected a sharper and severer sentence than I am now to pronounce. But the disposition of his majesty is to mercy; he hath invited his people to accept it, and it is the disposition of the body of this House to be healers of breaches, and to hold forth mercy to men of all conditions, so far as may stand with justice, and the justification of themselves before God and man. I am therefore commanded to let you know, that that being their disposition, and the present subject of this day's debate being mercy, you shall therefore taste of mercy; yet I am to give you a sharp reprehension; and I do, as sharply and severely as I can (for so I am commanded), reprehend you for it." Parl. Hist., vol. 4, pp. 42, 43.

Whigs and Tories—Character of the Parties so called, from Lord John Russell's "Life of Lord William Russell."

[End of Reign of Charles II.]—Whigs and Tories.—The origin of these names is well known: that of the parties took its rise from the new circumstances of the country. The Whigs formed a popular party, far less enthusiastic in their religious tenets, and less divided in their political views, than that which opposed Charles the First. With the exception, perhaps, of Sydney, who was not in Parliament, none of them wished for anything more than a regular execution of our ancient constitutional laws—government by Parliament, and trial by jury. The hereditary succession of the crown was, in their eyes, a rule for the benefit of the people, and not a dispensation of Providence for the advantage of a single family. If at any time, therefore, the observance of the rule became dangerous to the welfare of the community, the legislature was, in their opinion, competent to consider whether that danger was greater than the inconvenience of deviating from the established course.

In carrying on the ordinary government of the country, their chief aim and endeavour was to preserve unimpaired the rights and liberties of the people. If, to obtain these objects, they sometimes asked for the confirmation of privileges which were doubtful

and even the establishment of some that were new, these were only natural steps in the progress of civilization. For the same rights which, fenced by uncertain boundaries, are, in barbarous times, the occasion of discord and civil war, become, when accurately defined, the safeguard of national tranquillity. A law to be really efficient, must not only be good in itself, but must be easy of execution, and unassailable on every side. A statute enacting the liberty of the press would be of no use, if the administration of justice were not pure; the responsibility of ministers would be a phantom, if the king could grant a pardon previous to impeachment. The Act of Magna Charta itself was frequently violated, and became the cause of the most destructive wars. But its purpose having been completed by the Act of Habeas Corpus and the Bill of Rights, personal liberty and public tranquillity are undisturbed.

To the necessity which exists of thus filling up the outline sketched by rude hands, we must attribute many of the pretensions which Mr. Hume has pointed out as innovations.

With respect to religious distinctions, the Whigs, it must be owned, had generally a leaning towards the Dissenters. Nor did this arise only from the love of freedom remarkable in those sectaries. It was connected with a laudable desire for toleration to every sect but one, which was active in its endeavours to alter the government.

The Tories, on the other hand, were attached to the laws as well as the Whigs, but were for leaving entirely to the king whether or not they should be executed. They considered the crown as a sacred and unalienable inheritance. They held that the right of the successor to the throne was paramount and indefeasible. And as the Whigs wished to allow liberty as far as could be consistent with monarchy, the Tories desired to give to monarchy everything that was compatible with safety. Their attachment to the established religion alone was stronger than to the established government. At the time of which we are treating, these two principles of theirs were perfectly consistent. Whilst the Tories professed that they never would abandon the Church, the Church declared that no circumstance whatever could alter their allegiance to the king.

It must not be supposed, however, that the Tories, though loud in their professions of unlimited submission, ever seriously meant

that they would not resist in an extreme case. They sincerely venerated the laws, and dreaded the subversion of our ancient constitution. Thus whilst they spoke with abhorrence of resistance to their sovereign, their conduct had a direct tendency to produce it. For their silent acquiescence in acts of petty tyranny encouraged the King to proceed to still greater outrages, till at last no remedy was to be found but in a revolution.

The Whigs, on the other hand, by their persevering opposition, acted in a manner to prevent the necessity of the resistance of which they spoke so much.

These parties, it must be owned, have their foundations deep in the opinions of the country. As long as there is a body of men in the country attached to Church and King, more than to the Constitution, the Tory party will subsist; and as long as there is a large portion of the people who consider monarchy only as the best protection for liberty, the Whig party will flourish.

Character of the Tory Party—Situation of the Whig Party —in the year 1685, *from Mr. Fox's "History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II."*

The general character of the Tory party at this time [1685] appears to have been a high notion of the King's constitutional power, to which was superadded a kind of religious abhorrence of all resistance to the monarch, not only in cases where such resistance was directed against the lawful prerogative, but even in opposition to encroachments, which the monarch might make beyond the extended limits which they assigned to his prerogative. But these tenets, and, still more, the principle of conduct naturally resulting from them, were confined to the civil, as contradistinguished from the ecclesiastical, polity of the country. In church matters, they neither acknowledged any very high authority in the crown, nor were they willing to submit to any royal encroachment on that side; and a steady attachment to the Church of England, with a proportionable aversion to all dissenters from it, whether Catholic or Protestant, was almost universally prevalent among them. A due consideration of these distinct features in the character of a party so powerful in Charles's and James's time, and even when it was lowest (that is, during the reigns of the two first Princes of the

House of Brunswick), by no means inconsiderable, is exceedingly necessary to the right understanding of English history. It affords a clue to many passages otherwise unintelligible. For want of a proper attention to this circumstance, some historians have considered the conduct of the Tories, in promoting the Revolution, as an instance of great inconsistency. Some have supposed, contrary to the clearest evidence, that their notions of passive obedience, even in civil matters, were limited, and that their support of the government of Charles and James was founded upon a belief that those princes would never abuse their prerogative for the purpose of introducing arbitrary sway. But this hypothesis is contrary to the evidence both of their declaration and their conduct. Obedience without reserve, an abhorrence of all resistance, as contrary to the tenets of their religion, are the principles which they professed in their addresses, their sermons, and their decrees at Oxford; and surely nothing short of such principles could make men esteem the latter years of Charles the Second, and the opening of the reign of his successor, an era of national happiness, and exemplary government. Yet this is the representation of that period, which is usually made by historians and other writers of the church party. "Never were fairer promises on one side, nor greater generosity on the other," says Mr. Echard. "The King had as yet in no instance invaded the rights of his subjects," says the author of the Caveat against the Whigs. Thus as long as James contented himself with absolute power in civil matters, and did not make use of his authority against the Church, every thing went smooth and easy; nor is it necessary, in order to account for the satisfaction of the parliament and people, to have recourse to any implied compromise, by which the nation was willing to yield its civil liberties as the price of retaining its religious constitution. The truth seems to be, that the King, in asserting his unlimited power, rather fell in with the humour of the prevailing party, than offered any violence to it. Absolute power in civil matters, under the specious names of monarchy and prerogative, formed a most essential part of the Tory creed; but the order in which Church and King are placed is the favourite device of the party is not accidental, and is well calculated to show the genuine principles of such among them as are not corrupted by influence. Accordingly, as the sequel of the reign of James will abundantly show, when they found themselves compelled to make an option, they preferred, without any degree

of inconsistency, their first idol to their second, and when they could not preserve both Church and King, declared for the former.

It gives, certainly, no very flattering picture of the country, to describe it as being in some sense fairly represented by the servile parliament of 1685, and not only acquiescing in, but delighted with, the early measures of James's reign; the contempt of law exhibited in the arbitrary mode of raising his revenue; his insulting menace to the parliament, that if they did not use him well, he would govern without them; his furious persecution of the Protestant dissenters; and the spirit of despotism which appeared in all his speeches and actions. But it is to be remembered, that these measures were in no respect contrary to the principles or prejudices of the Tory party, but rather highly agreeable to them; and that the Whigs, who alone were possessed of any just notions of liberty, were so out-numbered and discomforted by persecution, that such of them as did not think fit to engage in the rash schemes of Monmouth or Argyle, held it to be their interest to interfere as little as possible in public affairs, and by no means to obtrude upon unwilling hearers, opinions and sentiments, which, ever since the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in 1681, had been generally discountenanced, and of which the peaceable or rather triumphant accession of James to the throne, was supposed to seal the condemnation.

Second Edition.

NOTICE TO THE READER.

On a recent visit to Paris (during the Easter Vacation) I was forcibly reminded, in very numerous conversations with some Members of the National Assembly, of an observation often made to me by the late Earl Granville—that both Peers and Deputies had, in general, great difficulty in understanding "Party," in relation to the English Constitution.

Upon my return to London, having a deep *personal* interest in France, I had the ensuing pages printed, and distributed copies amongst my many relations and connexions in that country.

Most of the type having from an accidental circumstance been kept standing, a few additional copies, forming this Second Edition, are now worked off, some of which are placed at the disposal of Mr. Pickering.

C. P. C.

12, *New Square, Lincoln's Inn,*
14*th September*, 1850.

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